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THE DARKEY & COMIC DRAMA

The Serenade Party



Chicago.

THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY.



THE SERENADE PARTY

OR

THE MISER'S TROUBLES

A Black Sketch in One Act

BY

FRANK DUMONT

AUTHOR OF "FALSE COLORS," "TWO LITTLE VAGRANTS," "THE
LADY BARBER," ETC.



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P543

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

HIRAM STAGGERS—A miser.....*E. N. Slocum.*
JACOB TOUCHBRAIN—His servant.....*Hughey Dougherty.*
GEORGE WILKINS.....*Will Walling.*
JENNY STAGGERS.....*Fred Dart.*

Serenaders, Guests, etc.

Plays twenty minutes.

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PROPERTIES.

Chairs. Table. Tray. Apples. Glasses of lemonade. Slices of bread. Bunch of onions. Saucers of flour and spoons. Hoops and dress for George. Club for Jacob. Curtains. Screen. Small split stick for Jacob to strike guests' hands.

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“THE SERENADE PARTY.”

SCENE.—*Chamber ; door in c. Window R. with curtains. Table, chairs, screen L. Enter Staggers, L. I E.]*

Stag. This settles it, I must do what I thought of doing. I will lock Jenny in this room. I am troubled to death by that lover of hers. I have thrown him from the balcony and scalded him with hot water, but still that has no effect. [Calls.] Jacob ! Jacob ! Jacob !

Jacob. [Enters c.] Yes, sir. Did you call me ?

Stag. Yes, Jacob, I'm going to lock Jenny in this room and give the key to you. [Knock at door.] Jacob, there's a knock at the door.

Jacob. Yes, I heard it plain 'as you did.

Stag. Go see who it is ; and, Jacob, step light on the carpet going down so as not to wear it out. Go on.

Jacob. Oh ! He's the stingiest man that I ever saw. The old fool. [Exit C.]

Stag. Confound these servants, they eat so much and break my dishes and waste everything. They will reduce me to poverty if I don't soon get rid of some of them. [Noise outside.] More trouble I expect. [A dish is heard to break.] My ! oh, my ! there goes another dish. Oh, the rascals ! [Enter Jacob with letter, C.]

Jacob. Here's a letter for you.

Stag. What was that broke just now ?

Jacob. Oh, I threw a plate at a cat that was going to steal a bone out of the yard. I scared her !

Stag. Oh, you will drive me mad. [Reads letter.] “Friend Staggers, to-night at twelve we will give you a serenade and expect to have a good time. Yours truly, Many Friends.” I wish they were at the bottom of the sea. Coming to serenade me ! It is a plot to make me spend my money. They'll expect lunch and liquor. Jacob, I'm to have a serenade and I want you to

help me out. Follow me to the kitchen. Come ! Oh, what an unfortunate man I am. [Exit L. I E.]

Jacob. What an old miser he is to be sure. [Staggers calls "Jacob ! Jacob !" Exits L. I E. Enter Jenny, D. C., looking cautiously.]

Jenny. So my old uncle was going to lock me up in this room ? But as luck would have it this serenade has upset all his plans. [Taps.] Ah ! some one is tapping at the window. [Goes to window.] George, is it you ? [Enter George through window.]

George. Where's the old man ?

Jenny. He has just stepped down into the kitchen. I'm afraid he'll come back and catch you here.

George. Oh, no ! Don't be afraid. I'm too smart for him. Here's a bouquet I brought for you. [Takes bunch of onions from pocket.] Why ! I declare I put a bouquet in that pocket. Some one has been playing a trick on me. [Throws onions on floor.]

Jenny. Never mind, George, I feel just as happy as if I had your present. [Noise.] Oh, dear ! The old man is coming ! Quick ! Hide !

George. I can't get out of the window, so I'll hide behind the curtains. [Hides behind curtains. Jenny pretends to arrange furniture. Enter L. I E. **Jacob.** He stares at her.]

Jacob. Ah ! that won't save you from being locked up in this room. I'll tell your uncle you put a pin in my chair the other day. I wonder is it raining ? [Goes to window; looks out. George knocks his hat out of window.] Hello ! there goes my hat. Did you knock my hat off ?

Jenny. Why, I have not been near you.

Jacob. You go right out of here, or I'll call your uncle. [Exit Jenny, L. I E. As Jacob goes to turn from window George trips him up. Jacob falls.] I wonder if I took too much of the old man's cider to day ? [Sees onions.] Ah ! ha ! there's some onions. Now the old man never gives me onions. He says they are too expensive. I'll have a nice meal. [Takes bread out of pocket, brings table near window and eats. George takes bread and throws it out of window. Jacob looks around for it.] I could swear I put that bread there. Well, I must eat these onions. [Eats onions.] Ah, that's strengthening. [Enter Staggers L. I E.]

Staggers. Ah, you rascal ! eating again, are you ? Where did you get these onions ? [Jacob blows in his face, Staggers starts back.] Phew ! how bad they smell. Don't come near me—you smell too strong of onions. Now, Jacob, I want to tell

you this. [Leans on table.] I expect the serenade at twelve o'clock! [George pushes table. Staggers falls, gets up and hits Jacob.]

Jacob. What did you strike me for?

Stag. I'll teach you to play tricks on me. [Jacob leans on table.] Now I want you to understand one thing! [George pulls table and runs out D. C. Jacob falls, gets up, and hits Staggers.]

Jacob. I don't allow any one to fool with me that way.

Stag. Now listen to me, Jacob. You will have some lemonade and some cakes and apples and some ice-cream, and above all I want you to be very saving. Don't go around more than once with any lunch, and don't press any one to have any. Merely offer them some—but don't press them. Be very saving, Jacob. Don't put any sugar in the lemonade.

Jacob. Well, what will I put in it?

Stag. Put molasses in it. It's cheaper. Go and get three cents worth of apples and eight cents worth of ice-cream. Oh, these parties will ruin me! reduce me to poverty! [Gives money.] And, Jacob, don't knock down any change.

Jacob. No, there ain't much of a chance to knock down on you.

Stag. Put on a pair of gloves to wait on the company. Now get the tray and I'll show you how to go around. [Jacob gets tray.] Now you sit down over there. [Jacob sits R.] Now you are a lady.

Jacob. Where's my hoops?

Stag. Now watch me. [Enters with tray and glass.] Have some lemonade, miss? [Jacob goes to grab tumbler. Staggers walks off.] Now see that. Now you do it. [Staggers sits down.]

Jacob. Now look out for me. [Comic bus. with tray; goes to Staggers.] Say, old Blower, have some wine? [Staggers goes to take glass, Jacob walks off.] How is that? Ain't that on the save?

Stag. That will do first-rate. Now don't forget save all you can. I wonder where Jenny can be? [Noise; music and drums heard outside.] There is the serenade. [Runs to window followed by Jacob. Enter Jenny L. I E. All look out of window. Jacob pulls Staggers away, and Staggers pulls Jacob away.] Go to the door and let them in. [Exit Jacob, C. D.] Now, Jenny, you see how I am honored. This is your last appearance in society. To-morrow I send you to boarding-school. [Enter serenaders and ladies, George disguised in woman's dress.]

Stag. Ah ! welcome, friends—welcome !

Jacob. Yes, make yourselves miserable. [Gets chairs ; places one for **George** to sit, and pulls it away. **George** falls. All go to pick him up.] Why, something has dropped.

Stag. That stupid rascal will spoil all. Jacob, get some refreshments for the ladies. [Exit **Jacob**. **Staggers** sits beside **George**.] My dear widow Blinks, I'm so happy to meet you.

George. [Disguised.] Oh, don't mention it, Mr. Staggers. [Enter **Jacob** with tray, glasses of lemonade, goes around to guests, but snatches tray from them as they reach out to take glasses.]

Jacob. Have some lemonade !! [Staggers goes to take glass, Jacob kicks Staggers, who falls. Jacob exits R. I E. All the guests gather about Staggers for an explanation.]

Stag. [Rising.] My dear friends, I can't account for it. Jacob ! Jacob !! Jacob !!! [Enter **Jacob** R.] How dare you insult these ladies and gentlemen, sir ? Apologise to them !

Jacob. You told me to be on the save.

Stag. [Aside.] Hush ! Now, Jacob, get the cakes and be quick. Ah ! I gave him a lecture.

Jacob. I guess that old man is going crazy. [Exit R. Staggers sits by **George**, making love to the supposed widow.]

Stag. Ah ! here we have the cakes, let me help you to some. [Enter **Jacob** R. with tray and slices of bread ; he lets each one take a piece.]

Stag. Jacob, have you forgotten what I said ? Oh, you villain, you'll ruin me. [Jacob runs out R. and re-enters with a basket. He then runs to every one, snatches the bread from them, throws it into the basket and runs out. Ladies scream. All gather around Staggers for an explanation.]

Stag. Dear friends, allow me to apologise. He is my new servant and is very green and stupid. Jacob ! Jacob ! [Enter **Jacob**.] Jacob, don't be so quick and impulsive.

Jacob. Well, I want to save as much as I can.

Stag. [Aloud.] Jacob, bring in the ice-cream.

Jacob. Yes, sir. [Exit. Staggers sits down again and puts his arm around **George**. Enter **Jacob** with tray and saucers filled with flour ; he allows each one to take a plate.]

Stag. Now, friends, enjoy yourselves. [They eat but spit out flour.] Why, what ails the ice-cream ?

All. Why, this is flour !

Stag. You rascal, have you been fooling us ?

Jacob. Why, you are all fools, and don't know good ice-cream when you eat it. [They all come up and blow a mouth-

ful of flour into Jacob's face. As George comes up Jacob catches his dress, which comes off, discovering hoops. All scream. George runs behind screen.]

Stag. Oh, you scoundrel ! You'll pay for all this ! Bring in the apples, quick, or I'll discharge you.

Jacob. Ain't you going to do something ? You make me do all the work ! [Exits.]

Stag. Oh, I never saw such a blockhead. [George behind screen hangs hat on screen and whispers to Jenny, who sits close to it.] Oh, he'll drive me to a lunatic asylum. But where is widow Blinks ? [Enter Jacob with tray and apples, short stick in hand. As each one goes to take an apple, he hits them on the knuckles with stick. General confusion. All chase out after him C. D. All exit save Jenny.]

Jenny. I hope my dear George is safe. [Enter George from behind screen.]

George. Yes, safe ; and now the coast is clear, let us elope ! [Noise heard off R. I E. Jacob runs on R. I E., and stands behind tormentor R. and puts out his foot, tripping everybody who is pursuing him. They all stagger and fall C. Old Stagers rushes on and is tripped up by Jacob also. Jacob then gets a club from R., and beats the struggling heap of characters who lie squirming C. George and Jenny at back at C. D. ready to elope. The flats try to close in, but the struggling heap is directly in the way. Scene shifters push their half of the flat against the yelling, struggling mass on the floor. The whole affair seems like a huge mistake. Jacob still clubbing them, and shouting, "Get out of the way," etc.

CURTAIN.







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